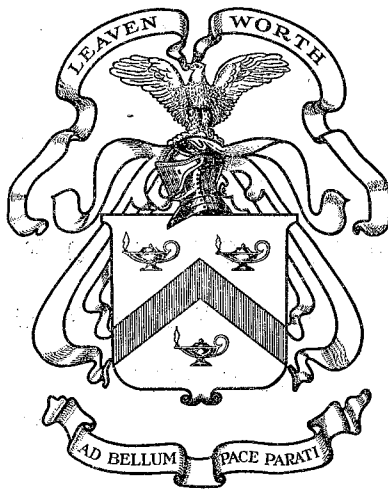


THE  
HISTORY OF  
FORT LEAVENWORTH  
1937-1951

SPECIAL COLLECTIONS



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THE  
HISTORY OF  
FORT LEAVENWORTH  
1937 - 1951

by

ORVILLE Z. TYLER, JR.  
Colonel of Infantry, US Army

*which brings up to date*  
HISTORY OF  
FORT LEAVENWORTH  
1827 - 1927

by

ELVID HUNT  
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and

SECOND EDITION  
brought up to date  
1827 - 1937

by

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Captain, Corps of Engineers, US Army

*With Foreword By*  
MAJOR GENERAL HORACE L. McBRIDE  
US Army

THE COMMAND AND GENERAL STAFF COLLEGE  
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas  
1951

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## FOREWORD

In 1952 Fort Leavenworth will celebrate its one hundred and twenty-fifth anniversary of service to this Nation. Founded in 1827 as a frontier post to protect the westward expansion against the Indians, it serves now in an even more important role. As seat of the Command and General Staff College it has gained renown by the achievements of its graduates in two world wars. In this anniversary year it faces an increasingly important mission as our Nation again prepares to contain the forces of aggression.

It is quite in keeping with the spirit of our anniversary to publish at this time this *History of Fort Leavenworth from 1937 to 1951* which brings up to date the original history published by Colonel Elvid Hunt in 1927 and revised by Captain Walter E. Lorence in 1937.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "H. L. McBride". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

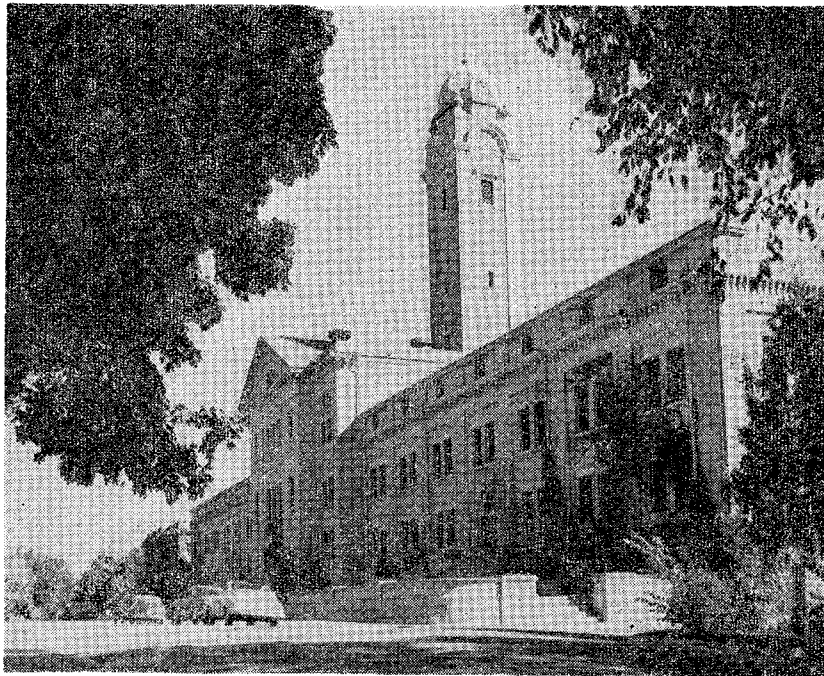
H. L. McBRIDE  
Major General, US Army  
Commandant





## INTRODUCTION

High on a tree-shaded bluff overlooking the wide, winding Missouri River stands Fort Leavenworth. Here in Kansas in the heart of the Nation is one of the Army's oldest and most famous posts. Founded by Col Henry Leavenworth in 1827<sup>1</sup> as an outpost against the plains Indians it has grown in reputation for quite a different reason. As home of the Command and General Staff College, and for a time also of the Army War College, its name has become synonymous world-wide with higher military education. Graduation from "Leavenworth" has become in the Army a sesame to high command or staff position. With the success of our armies in two world wars, this great school has gained in prestige and fame.



*The central College building.*

Gen W. T. Sherman, recognizing the need for trained officers for the Army after the Civil War, established the first school at Fort Leavenworth in 1881.<sup>2</sup> The name of the institution, "School of Application for Infantry

<sup>1</sup> Elvid Hunt and Walter E. Lorence, *History of Fort Leavenworth 1827-1937*, Second edition (Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, 1937), p. 17. Directed by GO 14, Adjutant General's Office, Washington, March 7, 1827.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*; p. 133, (GO 42, AGO, Washington, May 7, 1881) Gen Wm. T. Sherman, commanding the US Army directed that "as soon as the requisite number of troops can be assembled at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, the Commanding General, Department of Missouri, establish a school of application for infantry and cavalry similar to the one now in operation for artillery at Fortress Monroe, Va."

and Cavalry,"<sup>3</sup> is indicative. Emphasis on application is still paramount at Leavenworth. Instruction of students by practical application of techniques has remained one of the outstanding scholastic characteristics of Leavenworth as an institution of learning.

The school was closed in 1898 for the duration of the Spanish-American War<sup>4</sup> to free instructors and students to join units in the field.

### ORIGIN OF THE AMERICAN GENERAL STAFF

It was shortly after this, in 1899, that Elihu Root,<sup>5</sup> the father of the American general staff, became Secretary of War. The mistakes of the expedition against Cuba had convinced this farsighted statesman of the necessity for a US general staff. Risking his political future he almost single-handedly pushed through Congress in 1903 a bill which provided for a general staff. Root was aided in his efforts by such progressive American military thinkers as Generals William Ludlow, William Harding Carter, and Eben Swift.<sup>6</sup> The great statesman also acknowledged his indebtedness to the Englishman, Spenser Wilkinson,<sup>7</sup> who wrote a book on the general staff entitled *The Brain of an Army*.

The bill for the creation of the General Staff provided for an Army War College. This agency, the 3d Division of the General Staff, was charged among other things with the direction of military studies of all kinds including supervision of the school system. Part of this school system was the Staff School at Fort Leavenworth.<sup>8</sup> Its graduates were to supply the members of the General Staff of the US Army. How this task has been accomplished from the year 1937 up to the present will be covered briefly in the pages to follow.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid*; p. 136, (GO 8, AGO, Washington, January 26, 1882) General Sherman wrote to General Philip Sheridan, then in command of the Division of Missouri on November 22, 1881: "My Dear Sheridan: I am just in receipt of your letter of the 19th with the tabular list of the officers comprising the new School of Application at Leavenworth. I need hardly say that I regard it as admirable, and I feel sure that this school will become the best practical military school of all in the United States."

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid*; p. 150.

<sup>5</sup> J. D. Hittle, *The Military Staff: Its History and Development* (Harrisburg, Pa. 1944), p. 169.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid*; p. 170, Brig Gen Wm. Ludlow sent to Europe on a special assignment to study the Prussian Staff system, chairman of a board convened for the purpose of "taking preliminary measures toward the organization of a War College for the Army," p. 178, Maj Gen Wm. Harding Carter, author of *Creation of the American Staff*, and close associate of Elihu Root.

p. 170-171, Brig Gen Eben Swift, Instructor and later Commandant at Fort Leavenworth "introduced a course in tactical orders." "In a real sense it was Eben Swift, as well as Elihu Root, who gave us our modern General Staff."

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid*; p. 132, Spenser Wilkinson, English military writer on staff organization.

<sup>8</sup> General Order No 89, AGO, Washington, August 1, 1902, published program of the reopened school which was designated The General Staff College.